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Texas Petroleum. By WILLIAM BATTLE PHILLIPS, Ph.D., Director.
The University of Texas Mineral Survey Bulletin No 1;
102 pp., plates, maps. Austin, July, 1901.

THE University of Texas Mineral Survey, organized in May, 1901, with Dr. William B. Phillips of the university as director, establishes a new record for expeditious work in official geologic investigation by the timely appearance of this volume on a subject which is attracting much attention within the state and without.

An historical account of the development of the Texas oil fields is followed by a chapter on the nature and origin of petroleum, and other chapters on the oil and gas-bearing formations and the utilization of Texas oils.

The Paleozoic formations are not known to hold oil or gas in commercial quantities. The Cretaceous formation, more specifically the Corsicana field, has furnished practically all of the oil which has been produced until the current year. This field has a well-defined extent of from two to three miles in width by six and one-half miles in length in a northeasterly direction. The oil is reached at a depth of 1,050 feet in a soft, gray, foraminiferal shale. In July, 1901, there were 603 producing wells, with an average daily output of about 3,000 barrels of oil worth 70 cents per barrel. The production of oil in Texas for 1899 was 669,013 barrels, while that for 1900 was 836,039 barrels, almost all coming from this field. The Corsicana refinery has a capacity of 1,500 barrels of crude oil daily. Half the output consists of gasoline and kerosene, the residuum being marketed as fuel.

In the Tertiary, the Nacogdoches field was the first to be discovered, dating from 1867. The oil is found in Eocene strata at depths of 70 to 150 feet, and is a heavy lubricating oil with a high boiling point and non-gumming qualities. No oil has been produced in this region since the early part of 1900.

The Beaumont field has been the center of attraction since January 10, 1901, when the famous Lucas "gusher" was brought in. In July, 1901, there were fourteen producing wells all within an area 1,000 by 2,000 feet on Spindle Top Heights, a low ridge lying about four miles south of Beaumont. The ridge is about one mile wide and two miles long in a northeasterly direction and reaches a maximum elevation of 30 feet above the surrounding prairie. Wells outside the proven area are dry. It is presumed that the ridge marks an anticline, though

the structure is not yet known certainly. Concerning the fabulous production of the gushers, no definite figures can yet be given, but the production is unquestionably large. Pipe lines connect the field with tide water at Sabine Pass and Port Arthur where refineries are in process of construction. In quality the oil is a heavy fuel oil, the price of which, in July, 1901, varied from 20 to 40 cents per barrel.

In connection with the origin of the oil, an investigation was made of the so-called "oil ponds," certain quiet spots in the Gulf near Sabine Pass and popularly supposed to be caused by oil escaping from submarine springs. The areas were found to be over extensive beds of black ooze. The examination of samples of this ooze disclosed the presence of sulphur and of diatoms containing oil globules, but of no free oil except such as manifestly came down from the overflow of the Beaumont wells. Sulphur deposits occur over the Beaumont oil horizon. The possible analogy of the present conditions to the conditions prevailing when the Beaumont oil-bearing formation was deposited is suggested as well as the possible connection of diatoms with the oil production.

The report is well printed and illustrated with a number of photographs of characteristic scenes in the different fields, including several of the "gushers" in action, and is in all respects a worthy inauguration of the new survey.

C. E. S.

Lessons in Physical Geography. By CHARLES R. DRYER. American Book Co.: New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago, 1901.

This text-book of high-school grade covers the field of physical geography from the modern standpoint. It has several characteristics for which it deserves recognition as more than a mere variation of what has already been accomplished in other books. It is, first of all, a very concrete presentation of the physiographic principles which have recently come into prominence. Thirty-four pages are given to three typical river systems, the Mississippi, the Colorado, and the St. Lawrence, and thirteen pages to the drift sheet of North America, beside the general treatment of glaciers. The chapters which are devoted to more general subjects also abound in descriptive examples and pictorial illustrations. In the second place, the book has a large number of illustrations which are new to text-books; many of these are drawn from Indiana and neighboring states and will be welcome